

TOURISM AFLOAT

WATERWAY NEWS FOR TOURISM OPERATORS

NEW FLOATING INFORMATION CENTRE OPENS IN PADDINGTON

providing free information for boaters, walkers, cyclists, anglers, day-trippers and tourists visiting London's canals.



The new information centre in Paddington

The boat's name, 'Jena, the Paddington Information Boat' was chosen by pupils from year 5 of local primary school Edward Wilson, following a visit to the boat earlier in the month.

Donna Kelly, British Waterways' customer service supervisor, explains:

"The new boat will be moored on the canal in Paddington Central between Little Venice and Paddington Basin and will occasionally travel to canal events across London.

"Sixteen million visits are made to the

capital's waterways each year for walking, cycling, boating and visiting waterside cafes, pubs, restaurants and attractions. We hope our new information centre will be a great resource for people visiting the area and for local people who want to find out more about London's wonderful network of canals and rivers."

The traditional 60ft-long wide-beam canal boat was built by the New Boat Company in Droitwich, Worcestershire. It has a public reception area with an enquiries desk, leaflet display and on-line

access to Waterscape.com and other tourist websites, plus a small office, storage space, bathroom and kitchen for staff.

As well as visitor information, services for boaters will be provided including the sale of British Waterways' keys, electricity and pump-out cards. The boat will be open between 10am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday and will occasionally open at weekends for events.

DEVELOPMENT CREATES BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES



**New mixed use developments
on London's waterways**

A new generation of waterside developments providing investment and boating facilities are emerging on London's waterways.

Mixed use developments such as those at Brentford and the proposals for Hale Wharf are embracing the waterside as part of the community by developing new moorings and marinas and providing retail and office space.

Waterside businesses are receiving a boost from the increased footfall in the area and new businesses are being created. In Brentford a cafe,

hotel, restaurant and new moorings have been established and in Northolt, a 22-berth marina and restaurant is being built by Taylor Woodrow.

"We were determined to capture something of the canal's vibrancy and heritage in our schemes and the most obvious way seemed to be to bring the water into the development," says Keith Lamey, Taylor Woodrow's Regeneration Director.

INDUSTRY COMMENT: JASON'S WHARF

Jason's Trip Boats launched in Little Venice over 50 years ago and is now the oldest trip boat operator on London's canals. Now with a restaurant business, Jason's Wharf has a bright future as a leading waterway business in London. Here **Rob Chambers** explains how he and new owners NZI Ltd have capitalised on the brand and harnessed a growing business. He believes that the future of waterways businesses is collaboration not competition.

Fifty years after it began, Jason's Trip boats continue to take visitors to London's Regent's Canal on sightseeing cruises from Little Venice to Camden Lock.

The reputation of all elements of Jason's Wharf, the restaurant, party boats and the boat trips are key factors in their success. It's the sort of promotion you can't buy but is the most effective.

We build on this reputation with a retention marketing campaign, cross marketing with our other businesses, and providing outstanding customer service. Repeat business and recommendation is our ultimate goal.

We see London's waterways as an under utilised and precious resource hence

we are working very hard to publicise and open up the 'London waterway experience' to both local residents and tourists alike.

We consistently receive very positive feedback from our passengers often followed by comments like "why didn't we know sooner that this sort of experience was available?" So, a key part of our strategy is to continue to build relationships between ourselves, British Waterways and key tourism organisations.

We have established business partnerships with Visit London and Visit Britain and would like to develop a co-operative working relationship with other waterways stakeholders (including our competitors) for mutually beneficial

marketing to generate a vibrancy and buzz about the area. Feel free to contact us if you want to get involved in joint marketing, local events, trade shows and other such activities where it adds mutual value to our businesses and profile. You can contact Rob Chambers on
T 020 7286 6752



Jason's Wharf, Little Venice

BRITISH WATERWAYS OPENS NEW OFFICE AND INFORMATION CENTRE

British Waterways London has opened its new office and customer reception in Brentford, West London on the Grand Union Canal.

The new offices are part of a £100 million waterside development of new homes, restaurants and a hotel and will serve both boating customers and visitors to the canal.

Alongside the new office will be a new facilities centre for boaters offering 'Elsan', pump out, water, rubbish disposal, laundry, showers and toilets. In addition, a new operational yard will be established at the historic Adelaide Dock close to North Hyde on the Grand Union Canal. Brentford's reception hours will be 9am to 1pm and from 1.30pm to 4pm. Customers will

be able to buy electricity and pump out cards, BW keys and waterway guides as well as pick up licence applications and information on London's waterways. The new address is 24 Canute House, Durham Wharf Drive, Brentford, Middlesex TW8 8HP
T 020 7985 7780



British Waterways new waterside office in Brentford

HARLOW: BECOMING A DESTINATION

Harlow Town is not famed as a visitor destination however, recent improvements to the area around the River Stort could change this.

The River Stort is a beautiful stretch of river running through a rural valley along the Herts/Essex boarder and attracts many visiting boats, walkers and wildlife lovers. The section which runs through Harlow has been undergoing a number of improvements for visiting boats to the Stort Valley and to encourage local people to make use of their waterways. Recent works to improve the River Stort towpath and bridge crossing the navigation have enabled British Waterways to create a new two mile circular walking route linking the

Moorhen pub and marina with Terlings Wood and Parndon Mill Lock with Harlow Town Park. A self guided walk leaflet has been produced and new signage markers and interpretation boards have been installed along the towpath. From this summer, a new charter boat operator will provide day cruises on the River Stort leaving from Parndon Mill. British Waterways London has also secured £fi million of funding towards a second phase of towpath enhancements over the next two years. The work will involve widening and re-surfacing narrow sections of towpath between Roydon and Parndon Mill.

ENHANCING BISHOP'S STORTFORD

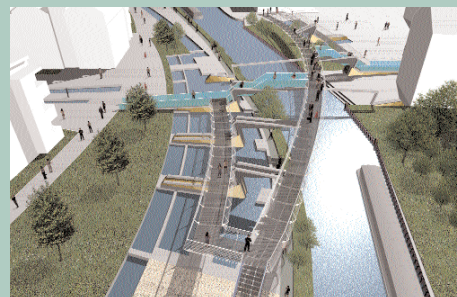
The growth of the Bishop's Stortford and Stansted corridor has contributed to considerable development along the River Stort at the head of the navigation. New homes, shops, pubs, cafés and public squares are under construction as part of the redevelopment of Jackson Square by Wilson Bowden Developments, the first phase of which is due for completion in early 2007.

British Waterways is also injecting some much needed regeneration into this area. On the River, a new trip boat mooring is being created to encourage visitors and local people to explore their local waterways. Anyone wishing to express an interest in running the new trip boat operation should contact Mark Blackwell, Leisure Development Manager, British Waterways London. T 020 7985 7200

The old crane at the top of the navigation has been fully refurbished and boater's facilities are also being improved over the

next few months with a new pump-out added to the existing sanitary services in the town.

East Herts District Council was recently awarded funding to construct a new cycle and pedestrian bridge across the River Stort providing improved east/west links with the train and bus stations and town centre. Further funding bids are currently being prepared for wider towpath and mooring improvements through Bishop's Stortford.



The new bridge at Bishop's Stortford

CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT THE CANAL DURING NATIONAL SCIENCE WEEK

To celebrate National Science Week, British Waterways London, Islington Education Business Partnership and Setpoint West London have been providing schools in Islington and Hillingdon with a series of activities to explore the wildlife, history and engineering features of their local canals.

Over the course of two weeks, more than 500 pupils enjoyed a day on the canal learning how it was built, how tunnels were constructed and what kind of wildlife lives along the waterways.

Elaine Stanley, British Waterways' learning services officer, explains: "Canals and rivers are both fun and educational. Constructed over 200 years ago to carry goods they are now mainly used for leisure. We are introducing a new generation to London's waterways. Hopefully they will bring relatives to their

local waterspace and grow up to love it and use it like we do".



Children enjoying a day as part of National Science Week

WILDLIFE SURVEY REVEALS REALLY WILD WILDLIFE

A UK-wide survey, conducted by British Waterways with the help of hundreds of visitors to the canal and river network, has uncovered surprisingly rare and sometimes bizarre wildlife on the nation's and London's waterways. Whilst ducks, swans, herons and dragonflies are common to our waterways, a number of extraordinary birds and animals were spotted, including: seals, dolphins and porpoises in Scotland; an osprey near Oxford and a small crocodile in the Cotswolds!

The information gathered from hundreds of participants will be used by British Waterways to help manage and protect the

rich array of wildlife in canals and rivers.

Some of the rarer and more unusual species spotted in London include: an otter in Brentford; kingfishers in Roydon, Harlow, Tottenham, Hoxton, Bow and Cowley; bats at Rickmansworth, Cowley, Tottenham, Islington and Lisson Grove; water voles in Tottenham and Cowley; and a green woodpecker on the Grand Union Canal in Hanwell.

Alien species spotted on London's waterways include: a mink on the River Stort at Roydon; terrapins on the River Lee at Tottenham, a ruddy duck on the Regent's Canal in Islington; and Chinese Mitten Crabs

on the Bow Back Rivers in Bow. For more information visit www.waterscape.com/wildlife



Alien species: terrapins in Britain's waterways

VISITOR RESEARCH RESULTS

British Waterways' programme of market research for last season was completed in October 2005 and results were reported early this year.

There are four main surveys which run across the waterways nationally and look at towpath users, day visitors to priority sites, people taking boating holidays and boat owners.

Overall the London surveys reported that more visitors than in 2004 felt we exceeded their expectations and there has been a general improvement in customer satisfaction in terms of overall enjoyment among towpath users, boat owners and day visitors.

The top three areas for improvement were cited as litter on the towpath and in the canal, frequency of visitor moorings and the condition of the towpaths.

To address these concerns, from 2006

onwards British Waterways will be focussing resources at 12 key destinations along the network. This new focus will see maintenance contracts dealing with litter, dog foul, graffiti, towpath surfaces and overall upkeep. In addition, leisure development potential, new visitor moorings and boaters' facilities will be assessed at these most popular destinations with a view to providing more to meet our customers needs and expectations.



Visitors to the canals asked their views

GREAT DAYS OUT

In 2006, British Waterways London will publish a new leaflet promoting the idea of a 'day out' on your local waterway's.

During the cold winter months, the leisure team have been out and about researching visiting sites and drawing up suggested itineraries.

Ten destinations have been chosen and include, Hertford, Broxbourne, and Waltham Abbey on the River Lee; Little Venice/Camden, Kings Cross, the East End on the Regent's Canal; the Docklands as an area on its own and Denham, Brentford and Hanwell on the Grand Union Canal.

Suggested itineraries include walks, museums, attractions, boat trips, pubs, restaurants, picnic spots and wildlife watching opportunities. The itineraries and have been separated into those suitable for families and wanting to cover more ground.

The leaflet will be available from early May.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

29th, 30th April & 1st May
Canalway Cavalcade, Little Venice, London

27th May
Brentford Waterside Festival, London

1st July
Ware River Festival, Hertfordshire

29th & 30th July
Colne Valley Park Water and Wildlife Festival, Buckinghamshire

26th & 27th August
Funquay Beach Weekend, West India Quay, London

27th - 28th August
River Cultures Festival, West India Quay, London

Sunday 3rd September
Angel Canal Festival, Islington, London

9th & 10th September
Slough Canal Festival, Berkshire

For information regarding these events or to hold your own event on BW property please contact Louise Fishleigh, on T 020 7985 7234 or louise.fishleigh@britishwaterways.co.uk

VISIT LONDON PROMOTION

During the summer of 2006, Visit London, supported by TFL London River Services, will be running a marketing campaign focusing on London's waterways including the River Thames and London's canals.

Targeting the South East and Londoners, the media plan will cover regional radio, regional press, posters, a guide and specialised website.

Waterway businesses have already been contacted to participate in this campaign, which is due to launch at the end of May and run throughout the summer.

FILMING UPDATE

Filming along London's canals and rivers hit record highs in 2005 with some top productions choosing the waterways as backdrops for their filming.

Hollywood stars Sharon Stone, Robert DeNiro and Jude Law were some of the big names filming on the towpaths along with some British productions such as Bad Girls, Spooks, Inspector Lynley, Blue Peter and Hustle.

Any questions regarding filming in London can be directed to Rebecca Richardson at British Waterways.

For further information about how we promote London's waterways please contact

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